

Chapter Twelve: Terror

Terror as such is totally rejected by the Egyptian textbooks, which strive to arouse among the students feelings of disgust towards it and promote the cooperation of the individual citizens with the security authorities against this phenomenon. Strict Islamic laws against banditry are also reiterated in this context, in order to give the anti-terrorist campaign inside Egypt religious legitimacy against the local terrorists who are mainly Muslim extremists. But the books fail to apply these strict standards to other cases of terrorism, such as, for example, Palestinian terrorism.

Expressions against Terror

Terror should be fought against, and not only by the police. All Egyptian citizens have a responsibility in the campaign against terrorism, both by cooperating with the police and by refuting any Islamic legitimization of terrorism.

[...] will not [...] until [...] terror.

Language exercise, **Our Beautiful Language; Grammar and Grammatical Exercises, Grade 6, Part 1 (2002) p. 38**

The policemen fight terrorism in Egypt.

Social Studies: My Governorate Is Part of Egypt, Grade 4, Part 2 (2002) p. 48

Write a telegram to each of [the following persons]:

- A policeman who participates in the elimination of terrorism.

Social Studies: My Governorate Is Part of Egypt, Grade 4, Part 2, (2002) p. 49

The citizen and the policeman cooperate in fighting terrorism.

Our Beautiful Language: Reading and Texts – Exercise and Activity Booklet, Grade 7, Part 1, (2002) p. 6

We are all responsible for Egypt's safety and security.

Our Beautiful Language: Grammar and Grammatical Exercises, Grade 8, Part 1 (2002) back cover

We should fight extremism and terrorism and stand against them together, as individuals and as the government.

Islamic Notions in Environmental and Demographic Education, Grade 8, (2002) p. 90

Write a newspaper article in which you call upon the people to promote goodness on earth and desist from corruption, murder and terrorism.

Islamic Religious Education, Grade 7, Part 2 (2002) p. 25

The terrorists allege that by their aggression that they defend virtue. How should we answer them?

(Islamic Religious Education, Grade 8, Part 1 (2002) p. 30)

What a wonderful leader is President [Husni] Mubarak! He has led the march attentively, stood steadfast facing the fortress of terrorism and opportunism and served as the most wonderful example for his people, as well as for his Arab nation, in [his] persistent work and remarkable struggle. Is it not [our] duty to follow his example because he is a true mirror of our hopes and aspirations?

Our Beautiful Language: Reading and Texts – Exercise and Activity Booklet, Grade 8, Part 2, (2002) pp. 61-62

Islamic Aspects of the Anti-Terrorist Campaign

Terrorism contradicts the spirit of Islam. Those who commit acts of terror cannot be considered real Muslims.

Extremism and Terrorism

Extremism: means exceeding the bounds of moderation and the middle course, and inclining to exaggeration and strictness.

Terrorism: is intimidation, terrifying and using brute force that does not make distinction between an enemy and a friend, and between a small [child] and a grown up [man], in order to attain illegal gains. A terrorist is the one who follows the road of violence and terror in order to realize his goals.

Extremism and terrorism are things that cause great damage to the environmental balance by causing corruption and disorder in society, fear in [the hearts of] its sons, loss of its wealth, and the dissipation of its power. Oppression is substituted for justice, fear is spread, and security – which is one of God’s favors upon His servants – is lost.

One of the errors many people commit is that they talk about terrorism as a modern phenomenon. Had they read history and been aware of [what happened in the past], they would have discovered their error, for terrorism and extremism in opinion, thought and belief are as old as man. It will be sufficient for us [to mention] some historical events that will clarify that:

The two brothers Cain and Abel, Adam's sons, were quarreling... Cain turned into a terrorist when he became an extremist in his thought and [when] he was blinded by malice and jealousy towards his brother – the closest person to him of all people. Thus, the terrorist harms himself, his family, and all humanity. Cain was the first killer and the first terrorist on earth.

If we move on with the stories of the prophets, we shall find extremism and terrorism on the part of the stubborn infidels, beginning with the people of Noah and ending with the people of Muhammad.

The people of Noah mocked and tormented him as well as those [who were] with him who believed [in God]. The people of Abraham put him in the furnace in order to burn him, [and he would have been burnt], had it not for God's providence. The series of [acts of] extremism and terrorism against [God's] messengers and against those who believed in them among men continued. The Romans showed extremism against the [early] Christians and used the cruelest means of terrorism against them. They used to daub a Christian with tar and set him on fire. They used to tie a person between two branches of two [different] trees so that his limbs would be torn apart. The Jews in the [Arabian] Peninsula showed extremism towards the Christians of Najran, and kindled a fire in a trench and led twenty thousand Christian believers to that fire...³⁴

But the grave mistake made by many Westerners – which clearly incriminates them – is [the claim] that terrorism is an Islamic product. They have attached terrorism to Islam as [a result of] increased fanaticism and obstinacy. This is [a result of] ignorance of Islam and of its tenets, for Islam is a religion of moderation, compassion and kindness.

This allegation is one of the dishonorable forms of the war that is waged against Islam, bearing in mind that those who wage this war practice the gravest types of extremism and terrorism [themselves], [both] as individuals and as governments. What Israel is now doing is considered the most hideous of [all] types of terrorism and extremism! For how else should we name the expulsion of a whole people from its country, the seizure of its homes by force and their destruction?! Is Carlos – the famous terrorist, who practiced terrorism in most countries of the world, a Muslim?! Do not treat Islam unjustly, for it is a religion of tolerance and kindness...

(Islamic Notions in Environmental and Demographic Education, Grade 8 (2002) pp. 80-83)

³⁴ Qur'an commentators attribute this atrocity to the Yemenite king Joseph Dhu Nuwas (6th century CE) who converted to Judaism and persecuted the Christian community of Najran in northern Yemen.

Islam determines that an assault on one human soul is an assault on all mankind... The last of the Messenger's commandments in his Farewell Sermon relates to the inviolability of [the believer's] soul, property and dignity.

Islamic Notions in Environmental and Demographic Education, Grade 8 (2002) p. 86

[Questions]:

- Extremism and terrorism cause damage to the environment. Explain that.
- Terrorism is not a modern phenomenon. Rather, it is an old phenomenon, as old as man. Discuss, with examples.
- How would you answer those who repeat [the claim] that terrorism is an Islamic product?
- Islam determines that an assault on one human soul is an assault on all mankind.

Islamic Notions in Environmental and Demographic Education, Grade 8 (2002) p. 91

... The Messenger of God said: "A Muslim is one whose tongue and hand do not harm the people, and a believer is one whom the people trust with their lives and property".

Islamic Notions in Environmental and Demographic Education, Grade 8 (2002) p. 85



A charred Egyptian bus

"Is the one who did this a Muslim, while the Messenger [Muhammad] has said: 'A Muslim is one whose tongue and hand do not harm the people'?"

(Islamic Notions in Environmental and Demographic Education, Grade 8 (2002) p. 85)

Those who link terrorism and extremism to Islam commit a grave error, for Islam is innocent of that... Islam is a religion of moderation and kindness under all circumstances.

Islamic Notions in Environmental and Demographic Education, Grade 8 (2002) p. 90

"Islam has been a symbol of moderation, kindness, righteousness, compassion, the good word, the good exhortation, and everything beautiful and nice for a period of more than fourteen centuries. Now come some of its people who do not deserve to be part of it, whose souls are sick and whose minds are empty and ruined, and try to distort these beautiful and noble values. But wrong!... They have been strict, have made [Islam's tenets] difficult, have become fanatics. They have cut family ties, killed the innocent, made what is permissible forbidden and permitted themselves [to do] what is forbidden. But the true Muslims are lying in wait for them. In spite of their extremism and their terrorist activity, the sun of Islam will continue to shine and spread love, goodness, beauty, kindness and moderation to all mankind.

Islamic Notions in Environmental and Demographic Education, Grade 8, (2002) p. 107

Islam's strict rules against banditry apply to terrorism, including that type of terrorism that unjustly derives its legitimacy from religion itself.

Deviance, Banditry and the Spreading of Evil in the Land

The meaning of deviance is turning aside from the right path and from the order set by God for the Muslims in their life. It has degrees, beginning with small offenses against [this] order and ending with the greatest sins and crimes that destroy security and order within the state and spread corruption in it, which makes the lives of the servants [of God] miserable there. Some of the great crimes [are the following]:

Banditry [hirabah]

This [term] is taken from His words: "the punishment of those who fight God and His Messenger and spread evil in the land..." Its meaning is wider than murder because it can be [perpetrated] without the use of murder, like kidnapping girls and women, setting farms and houses on fire and other such crimes where murder is not committed. Rather, [other] criminal means are used in order to plunder property, spread fear and do what harms the interests of the people – both in terms of health and economy. What is meant by their fight against God and His Messenger is their revolt against the order that was determined by God, relying on their skills or power, etc.

Hirabah represents the peak of revolt against order and law, which spreads worry and fear within the nation, spoils the people's life and ruins their interests property by plunder, robbery, murder, destruction of plantations, damaging factories and highways, violation of dignity, trafficking in white poisons [i.e., drugs] and tempting people to use them, bank fraud, selling bad food to the people, attacking trains and cars in order to rob their passengers by force, forming armed groups in order to attack people even though they are [protected] under the protection of Islam [i.e., non-Muslim citizens in a Muslim state]. All that and similar [deeds] are considered fighting against God and His Messenger and spreading of evil in the land.

Their punishment in this world is given by the [following] noble [Qur'anic] verse: "Those that make war against God and His apostle and spread disorder in the land shall be slain or crucified or have their hands and feet cut off on alternate sides, or be banished from the land. They shall be held up to shame in this world, and in the world to come grievous punishment awaits them." (Al-Ma'idah, 33)

Had this sentence that was determined by God been applied, those who spread evil would have stopped their evil and desisted from it, and the people would have found respite from their evil...

[Some] of these Hirabah people who spread evil in the land are a group of youths and others who declare that they are Islamic and that they have zeal for Islam!! But [in fact] they fall under the influence of destructive people who are filled with psychological complexes against state and society. They disseminate among them tenets which they say are Islamic, but [in fact] have no connection with Islam, and instill in their souls [the idea] that the society – and even their own families – are non-Muslim infidels, that the state is [an] infidel [one] and that the men of religion are agents of the authorities – even those who oppose the authorities. They have legitimized robbing and killing those who differ from them in their views. They have taught them that they are the only [true] Muslims and they have the right to enjoin good and forbid evil by the power of knives, chains, daggers, rifles, cannons, bombs, etc.

Enjoining good and forbidding evil has its own methods, ways and degrees in Islam. But these [people] do not know that. They have formed armed groups which manufacture bombs and buy arms, or they [rather] steal them by force from those who carry them in order to use them for enjoining good and forbidding evil and for attacking anyone who differs from them in his views or acts to keep their evil away from the people.

[Even] if we agree with what they say, that they have zeal for Islam, it is impossible ever to agree with them regarding the legitimacy of what they do. They harm Islam, [harm] themselves and [harm] their country. They do not represent Islam anymore. Rather, they mutilate Islam and provide an

opportunity for its enemies to accuse it of being a bloody religion that uses murder as means of missionary propaganda. Also, with this activity of theirs, they have scared the Muslims away from the rule of Islam and the implementation of God's law, because it has been firmly embedded in the minds of many [people] that if Islam were to rule, they would see from it what they see from those [people].

Had they called for [following] God in a friendly manner and by persuasion, we would have hoped for much good from them, and anyone who loves Islam would have supported them...

We expect our youth to understand its religion correctly, assess the conditions through which the country is now passing and do whatever it can to get out of the bottleneck and get rid of the debts and the bitter need for the [aid of] foreign states...

If these young people directed their efforts to the development of the state's resources and to building it, instead of directing them to conspiracy, murder, destruction and the disruption of the people's security, it would be better for themselves and for their country, as well as a better guided path [religiously].

Islamic Education, Grade 9, (2002) pp. 63-5

[Questions:]

- One of the greatest crimes is Hirabah. Write down its meaning and explain its gravity.
- What is the punishment for Hirabah? Mention the evidence for what you say.
- Put a V sign next to each of the Hirabah types of what follows: Murder, cursing others, spreading panic, stealing, violation of honor, providing bad food to the people.
- Violence and extremism harm Islam and the Muslims. Explain that.
- There is a big difference between extremism and adherence to the tenets of religion. Explain this phrase.

Islamic Education, Grade 9 (2002) p. 69

Palestinian Terrorism is Considered Legitimate Resistance

While uncompromisingly fighting against terror in Egypt, the Egyptian school textbooks tend to see similar attacks by Palestinians against Israelis in a different light, i.e., as resistance against occupation. Egypt is said to have supported such acts.

The development of the Resistance Movement in Palestine..., the continuation of the Palestinian Fida'i movement....

Modern Arabic Literature, Grade 11, (2002) p. 121

At that time [after 1967] Egypt began supporting the Palestinian resistance inside the occupied territories. It [i.e., Egypt] began supporting and backing it [i.e., the Palestinian resistance] until it became a thorn [in Israel's side] causing Israel pain and concern...

The Fida'is³⁵ started infiltrating into Israel day and night, hitting the settlements, destroying roads, planting road mines, destroying power plants and water [pumping] stations, until fear, worry and confusion became widespread in Israel and its people lived in the trenches day and night. There were no more safe borders for them, as they had been claiming.

The Struggle of the People of Egypt, Grade 7, (2002) pp. 106-07

³⁵ Fida'i [plural fedayeen]: a warrior who is ready to sacrifice himself for a cause. In recent decades this term has become a title for members of the Palestinian armed organizations. In Egypt, it serves also as a title for men of the regular commando forces, as well as the guerrilla fighters who fought against the British forces along the Suez Canal in the early 1950s.